

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: Chairman and Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee.
Cllrs Baldwin (Chairman), Banks, Mrs Brunsdon, Mrs Collins DL, Gillbard, Johnson, Marmara, Musk, Reed, Mrs Waddingham (Vice Chairman), Town Mayor and Deputy Town Mayor.
(Other distribution for information only)

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16 March 2011

Dear Sir/Madam,

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE to be held in the COUNCIL CHAMBER, East Court on THURSDAY, 24 March 2011 at 7.45 p.m.

Yours faithfully,
C J ROLLEY,
Town Clerk.

A G E N D A

- 1 Public Question Time.
 - 2 To commence not later than 8 p.m. - Apologies for absence.
 - 3 To receive Minutes of the meeting held on 27 January 2011 (previously received).
 - 4 To receive any Declarations of Prejudicial and Personal Interest.
 - 5 To receive accounts for January and February 2011 (attached) (Min 287 27.01.11).
 - 6 To receive any recommendations of Committees.
 - 7 Town Council Finances - Position Statement (Min 287 27.01.11).
 - 8 Annual Reports from Representatives on Outside Bodies (Min 340 25.03.10).
 - 9 Appointment of Internal Auditor (Min 336 25.03.10)
 - 10 Risk Management (Min 159 23.09.10).
 - 11 Draft Accounts and Audit Regulations 2011
 - 12 Performance Indicators (Min 86 24.06.10) (Min 293 27.01.11)
 - 13 The Future of the Standards Regime
 - 14 West Sussex Pension Fund – 2010 Actuarial Valuation and Employer Contribution (Min 83 24.06.10)
 - 15 Investors in People – Annual Staff Training Report (Min 339 25.03.10)
 - 16 A Code of Recommended Practice for Local Authorities on Data Transparency
 - 17 Any Other Urgent Business
 - 18 To resolve that the press and public be excluded from the meeting on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.
 - 19 Annual Establishment Report (Min 346 25.03.10)
 - 20 Transfer of Ownership
- NB The next meeting of the Committee will be held on Thursday 23rd June 2011

EAST GRINSTEAD TOWN COUNCIL

To: All Members of the Finance & General Purposes Committee (24.3.11)
(Other distribution for information only)

Agenda Item 7: TOWN COUNCIL FINANCES – POSITION STATEMENT (Min 228 25.11.10)

Members are asked to note that the balances on the various Town Council accounts at 11th March 2011 were, rounded to the nearest £, as below.

	Revenue	Capital	Total
	£	£	£
Natwest Direct Reserve	315,216	60,740	375,956
Santander Time Deposit 6 months	50,000		50,000
NatWest Capital Reserve A/c		97	97
Natwest Current/ Reserve A/c	320	4,152	4,472
Royal Deposit Plan 3 year	250,000		250,000
Total	615,536	64,989	680,525

Agenda Item 8: ANNUAL REPORTS FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES (Min 340 25.03.10)

The Town Council appoints to a large number of organisations each year at the Annual Town Council meeting. The purpose of the reports that follow, which have been prepared by the appropriate Town Council representative, is to provide an update on the previous year's activities, to help inform understanding, and whether the representation is worthwhile and in both the Town council and Group's interest. Where no report has been received this is indicated:-

(1) East Grinstead Town Twinning Association Executive Committee – Councillor Gillbard:

Councillors Paul Johnson, Jim Joyce-Nelson and myself are the members appointed to the Twinning Association executive committee. I write this report on behalf of all of us. The committee has met on ten occasions during the year. On one occasion none of us were present, frequently two of us have been present and occasionally all three of us have attended.

The principle aim of Twinning is ***to encourage visits by individuals and groups to and from the linked towns, particularly by children and young people and the development of personal contacts, and by so doing to broaden the mutual understanding of the cultural, recreational, educational and commercial activities of the linked towns, and generally to encourage international friendship and understanding.***

The chairman of the Association has regularly sent newsletters to the Town Council so members may well be informed about the Association's activities during the year. However as a reminder I will now recall the more important activities that have occurred during the year.

The year started with a conference called by the Association which involved two rep's from all six of the twin towns in our group; this was held here at East Court. The purpose of the conference was to learn about the current situation in each town, to clarify each town's commitment to the twinning link, to agree the way forward for the annual "Youth in Europe" event and to seek ways of promoting the link. The event was chaired by The Town Mayor in his capacity as President of the Association; Cllr Johnson acted as minute secretary and wrote a full report of what was considered by all present to have been a very successful conference. Copies of the report can be obtained from Cllr Johnson.

At the end of October the Association responded to an invitation from San Feliu de Guixols by funding the visit of four young musicians and their music teacher from Sackville School. The four joined young musicians from the other five twin towns to form an orchestra which come the end of the weekend appeared on Catalan local television celebrating the 60th anniversary of the San Feliu music college. It was reported back to the committee that the young people through the way they had involved themselves in the weekend had been a credit to the town, their school & themselves. The father of one came to the Association AGM in November especially to thank the Association for enabling her to attend. It was he said an important part of her growing up.

March 4th-6th saw a Lakes Convention attended by fourteen different nationalities being held in Verbania. The Association was invited to send two young people. Feelers were put out to the Youth Council and Imberhorne School but with no take up a boy and girl from Sackville School attended along with the Town Mayor and Ken Averill. The boy's head mistress reported back that he had said it was "the best four days of his life"!

Plans were well advanced for a visit to East Grinstead in early June by the Mindleheim Town Band but because of travel difficulties they have recently called the visit off but have said they would like to come as soon as the visit can be rearranged. Watch this space!

A sub committee consisting of retired teachers and the chairman has met with representatives of all the towns' primary schools. As a result the Association has sent letters to all our twin towns to ascertain their interest in communicating with our schools. A power point presentation about our twin towns has been prepared for use when visiting our schools. The programme has just started with The Meads being the first school visited on Feb 15th.

The Association has been particularly concerned at the length of time that has passed with no visual recognition, for the benefit of our own residents and visitors, of the towns we are twinned with since the last signs at the entrances to our town were taken down. Your members on the Twinning Committee had hoped that by now the issue would have been resolved satisfactorily. Unfortunately that is not the case and it now seems that the Association will have to look to the next Council to correct this unfortunate omission.

Membership of the Association is currently around the one hundred mark. Fund raising and social activities have continued throughout the year with

the last social event, held on March 12^t, being very enjoyable French evening. A French chef produced a typically French four course meal, the main course being venison. Following the meal Association members entertained those present into the early hours of the morning with their own version of French entertainment”!

More than forty members enjoyed a week long “unofficial” visit to Mindleheim last April staying in a local hotel. For many members this was their first visit to Mindleheim. They were made very welcome being officially received by the mayor; old acquaintances were renewed and new friendships formed.

Fund raising is an important aspect of the Associations activities with 2013 always in mind as that is the year when East Grinstead will next be hosting the “Youth in Europe” event. In 2005/6 the last time that the town hosted the event the cost to the Association was c£18,000. The Association which acts on behalf of the Town Council, unlike all the towns we are linked with where twinning is officially organized and funded directly by the Town Councils, is grateful to the Town Council for the annual grant that it does receive and the use of rooms for its committee meetings.

(2) Mid Sussex District Association of Parish Councils: - Councillor Johnson

For this second year of my Chairmanship, I have continued to endeavour to lift the profile of the Association. Through the MSDC Parish and Towns Communications Group, I have arranged for correspondence to be routed through me, and there has consequently been a raised incidence of the passing on of useful information to the 22 parishes and 3 towns of Mid Sussex District. Following on from our successful joint conference with MSDC last year, we have been aware that it would not be possible to hold a similar conference this spring in view of the elections. My hope is that the Association will be able to mount perhaps a half day conference of its own in the late autumn.

The Association has held its normal 3 meetings, including the AGM, throughout the year, and I have secured speakers on each occasion. We had a presentation from the new West Sussex health body, from C.I. Ed de la Rue, and in February, by Garry Wall, Leader of MSDC with a Q & A session. As chairman, I have been involved with the Mid Sussex Partnership Board in arranging, in consultation with the CVS, for various seminars on safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults throughout the district. We have also succeeded in gaining representation for Mid Sussex Association of Town Councils on the MSPB.

Separately I have given advice to parishes on the various issues that have arisen as a result of our attendance at West Sussex Association of Local Councils meetings. I have chaired a session of West Hoathly Parish Council considering its own parish plan future. These are challenging times for all parish and town councils as they consider what enterprises they may wish to embark upon consequent on the Localism Bill, and whether they should cluster with surrounding parish(es) even outside the District boundary to achieve these goals.

I acknowledge the work of our Town Clerks' Secretary, Sarah Bunting, who has kindly acted as my Secretary and Treasurer of the Association. I also thank Cllr. Noel Thomas of Hassocks, who has been my deputy. They will be retiring this year, and I will be considering my position.

The Association's finances are sound, though fees may have to rise if a higher stipend is necessary for the future secretary. As we had the largest turn-out to our last meeting, I am confident that we have set a standard for the future of the Association.

(3) Age Concern, East Grinstead – Councillor Mrs Waddingham

Age Concern has built on its membership since my last annual report. It has also put new initiatives place, such as the computer courses and is planning to expand on these ideas.

The Help at Home franchise seems to be growing steadily under the guidance of a new co-ordinator and this in turn give ACEG some new membership. A new cook is in place and the meals are as popular as before. The new and improved hair dressing salon is taking new clients. A draft plan to offer Respite services is in place but at the time of writing is not yet in action. The minibus continued to cost in maintenance fees, so a partnership agreement with Bluebird is currently being sought.

Although there have been new members to the Trust the committee is still without a Treasurer and one is now actively being sought. ACEG are still taking on volunteers, with an admin assistant being the latest recruit. Staff and members were also sad to say goodbye to Elaine Radcliffe but a new assistant is now in place.

There are a number of outings planned for 2011, along with fund-raising events such as Curry Nights, Barn Dance and a Race Night and these were listed in a comprehensive newsletter that was sent out recently to members and interested parties along with information on their 500 club. ACEG are also taking part in the Health and Well Being Day in April and they are hoping to promote some of their new ideas such as the Computer Courses.

Steps are being taken to look into the possibility of expanding the Swan Mead premises – possibly by creating a new frontage.

Grants from MSDC and WSCC are still in place with representatives from these local authorities attending the management committee meetings, along with myself from EGTC. Our grant this year was to give a free hire of the Meridian Hall for the Christmas Party which was gratefully accepted by ACEG.

(4) East Grinstead Music and Arts Festival – Councillor Mrs Mainstone)

The East Grinstead Music and Arts Festival exists to encourage and promote dancing, singing and speech & drama in Sussex and neighbouring counties. The festival is held annually at Chequer Mead which enables the whole event to be held under one roof.

The festival dates for 2011 are for Singing - 2 April, for Dancing - 30 April, 1 & 2, 7 & 8, 14 & 15 May, and for Speech & Drama - 7 & 8 May.

The committee for the festival is very experienced and hardworking. All members are volunteers and give generously of their time to produce a high quality event.

The committee has found there are increasing costs involved with staging the festival with tight financial margins. Consequently the annual grant from the Town Council is much appreciated.

EGMAF has its own web site and this helps simplify the entries to the festival. www.egmaf.org.uk

Committee meetings attended this last year were on 8 June 2010, 14 September 2010, 17 September 2010 (AGM), 9 November 2010, 10 January 2011, 8 February 2011, and 8 March 2011.

(5) East Grinstead & District Access Group – Councillor Johnson

The group remains very active in trying to improve services for wheelchair users and others with a disability offered by the retail traders in the town, including the provision of a chair near the entrance to shops.

Project matters have included contribution to the negotiations for better facilities at the railway station, incapacity Benefits Assessments, Dropped kerbs in West Street, and a parking problem in Warburton Close. The Group has established a referral reference with MSDC with regard to the new replacement toilets to be erected at King Street. It has also expressed its concerns in relation to the closure of the Cantelupe Road toilets.

The Group has taken over responsibility to advise Mid Sussex District Council on all commercial and large planning applications in regard to access, throughout Mid Sussex.

The Group has mobility scooters and wheelchairs available for loaning, the number varying according to demand. It has a problem in finding suitable storage places for these and will welcome any assistance in that regard. Those who loan scooters are advised of the restrictions and insurance requirements.

The Access Group continue to run fundraising days at Sainsburys and Waitrose once each per year, and seeks grant funding from various sources, this of particular importance with the reduction in grant funding from WSCC.

There is concern that MSDC has agreed to extend the present lease of Sadlers Yard for one year only, with 6 months notice on either side. There are moves afoot to have alternative premises available.

I have attended all meetings apart from the last in January, due to a prior engagement.

(6) East Grinstead Town Museum – Councillor Mainstone:

The Town Museum is involved with its biggest challenge since being established in its new premises. Following the acquisition of the Queen Victoria Hospital collection, that reflects the work of McIndoe and the Guinea Pigs, the Town Museum has prepared grant applications to fund the extension, continued employment of the curator and to provide increased learning opportunities. The total cost of the project is £1.245m. This has culminated in the Town Museum facing an appearance before the Wellcome Trust Awards Committee. To reach this stage the Museum has successfully raised £35k to meet the development costs.

The grant application to the Wellcome Trust for £1.058m (85%) has been reviewed by six anonymous peers from the museum world and their responses have been received. On 15 March the Town Museum will make a presentation to the Awards Committee comprising twelve museum professionals, chaired by the director of a national museum. Following the presentation there will be a discussion of the presentation. The Museum should be informed of the outcome of the application the following day.

Information about the McIndoe and the Guinea Pigs project was to be explained at the annual Guinea Pigs' Christmas Dinner in December. Unfortunately snow prevented the eight town councillors from travelling. However another lunch has been arranged for 13 April when the project will be explained.

Meanwhile life goes on at the Town Museum and it remains on course to meet its financial and operational targets for the year. The main points are listed below:

- Visitor Perspective – the Museum reports a slightly below forecast for visitor numbers, but levels of visitor satisfaction remain high
- Organisational Development – there is continued training and development opportunities provided for trustees, staff and volunteers.
- Internal Quality – there has been considerable progress made with the accessioning and cataloguing of the Queen Victoria Hospital collection. There is an ongoing review of the museum's procedures.
- Financial perspective – the museum continues to operate within its cash flow projections.

The following meetings have been held and attended:

5/2/10 Launch of new exhibition "Girl Guiding 1910 – 2010"
16/2/10 Trustees meeting
23/2/10 Trustees meeting
22/4/10 Trustees meeting
22/4/10 Trustees training
26/5/10 Guinea Pig Club visit the museum
17/10/10 Receiving donation at Saint Hill
21/10/10 Friends Quiz night
16/12/10 Trustees meeting
24/2/11 Trustees training

Town Clerk's Informative: Please note that Councillor Mainstone will be able to update members of the Finance and General Purposes Committee on the outcome of the Wellcome Trust application at the meeting.

(7) East Grinstead Christmas Lights Committee: - Councillor Mrs Waddingham

Although no meetings have been notified during the year the Christmas lights in East Grinstead again were of a very high standard in 2010. Grateful thanks as always go to Melvin Phillips and his band of willing volunteers.

(8) Wallis Centre Management Committee – Councillor Mrs Collins DL

Throughout the year the work of the Committee has been two fold - to support the current youth work and to try to protect future provision of youth work in East Grinstead and the surrounding area.

The Wallis Centre staff continue to provide a wide range of generic and targeted activities. The Youth Workers work closely with Imberhorne and Sackville schools and the PCSOs. An initiative this year has been the establishment of a Facebook page.

Five years ago Jackie Cooper introduced the MOTIV8 project which initially took place in the summer holidays and involved other agencies. This has proved to be so successful that she expanded the timetable to include other school holidays. For example, during the recent February half-term youngsters experienced a wide range of activities at the Centre - art, music, cooking and off -site paintballing plus a day's trip to London for a visit to the Movie Museum, a Tour of London and a boat trip on the Thames. Chief Inspector Ed De La Rue has recognised the ongoing positive impact the MOTIV8 scheme appears to have had on juvenile crime figures and behaviour in the East Grinstead area. With Jackie Cooper's help, he has recently launched a replication of East Grinstead's successful model to cover the Burgess Hill and Hayward's Heath area.

The Committee was relieved to learn that the Wallis Centre was not to close but was saddened to learn that Jackie Cooper who has held the post of the full-time Neighbourhood Youth Worker for East Grinstead and the surrounding area for over 22 years had been granted Voluntary Redundancy due to this year's countywide £2million cut in the County Council Youth Service budget. The new structure for the Youth Service will be in place on 1st April and fully operational from 1st September. Crawley and Mid Sussex will come under one area. The work will be targeted youth work. Generic sessions will only be able to run if volunteers volunteer and no funding appears to be available for rural projects.

I have attended all but one of the committee meetings which are held on a six weekly cycle plus the Annual General Meeting. Due to the restructuring of the County Youth Service I have also attended several additional meetings and seminars.

(9) East Grinstead Council for Voluntary Services – Councillor Mrs Collins DL

This has been a very busy year for the local CVS. There have been many changes to both East Grinstead CVS and Mid Sussex South CVS. There

has been an increase in demand for services at a time when funding for the sector is becoming tighter. Through increased cooperation between the two CVSs it has been possible to continue to offer training and services to member groups. Christine Hardisty now acts as Chief Officer for both CVSs on District, County and National matters and represents both on Partnerships and Forums.

October 2010 saw the transfer of EGFLEET to Bluebird Community Partnership. The Trustees of both organizations worked together to reach an agreement which saw the vehicles still being based at East Court and the majority of the existing volunteer drivers staying on to provide the much needed dial a ride service for the people of East Grinstead.

Opportunities continue to be given to publicise volunteering opportunities. Different charities and voluntary groups were able to provide information about their activities alongside the Community Play ticket office in the former Wickenden's shop. On 5 October 2010 a joint venture was held at the Museum which led to the "Three Cheers for Volunteering" exhibition last month celebrating past and present local volunteering.

The CVSs in Mid Sussex held a District wide networking meeting in December in Ardingly. Local groups were given the opportunity to talk for five minutes about their organization. There were nine speakers from organizations as varied as Action for Deafness, Tadpoles, a benevolent society, ICIS, CARE, and CAB. The next networking meeting is planned for May and will discuss the "Big Society" implications for Mid Sussex.

In January the EG CVS responded to the Government's Consultation paper "Supporting a Stronger Civil Society". Whilst welcoming the Government's emphasis placed on the role of the voluntary and community sector, the response stressed the point that local needs are best met by local people and local organizations but provision must be sustainable and infrastructure must be in place (such as the expertise and advice currently offered by the CVS) to meet the needs of, and to support, voluntary groups.

Working within the East Grinstead Social & Community Group the CVS has fronted the organization for the Health and Wellbeing Day planned to be held at the Jubilee Centre on Saturday, 2 April from 10am – 1pm. Everyone is welcome to attend. A variety of activities will be offered, including:-

- Health checks by local GPs (e.g. blood pressure, BMI)
- Stands for local voluntary, statutory and private organizations with an interest in health and wellbeing.
- Entertainment by bands, dance troupes and choirs from the local area, including schools – all professionally compered.
- Demonstrations by local fitness and sports groups
- Information and advice on health and well being matters.

East Grinstead CVS meetings are held in six-weekly cycles. I have attended the Executive Committee, Finance & Purposes Sub Committees, collaboration with Mid Sussex South CVS and Crawley CVS meetings. As a trustee I have also attended countywide meetings for CVS Trustees.

The Trustees of the EG CVS are very grateful to East Grinstead Town Council for the grant support and the free room bookings given during the past year together with the promised increase of 10 free room bookings per year. We look forward to working even more closely following the anticipated move from the Court House into the Mansion during the next few weeks.

(10) East Grinstead Christmas Promotions Committee – Councillor Mrs Mainstone)

The promotions Committee successfully organized two special days during 2010 both with the aim of bringing people into the town centre for their enjoyment and to boost trade for the retailers.

The Family Christmas Day - 5 December 2010

Heavy snow threatened to prevent the Family Day from taking place. However, we thank the Town Council's Outside staff for their sterling work in clearing London Road of snow and ice. This allowed the event to go ahead despite the freezing temperatures. A big "thank you" to the Town Council from the committee for all their help. We were pleased that we took the brave decision to go ahead as the public turnout was high. The added advantage for the event was that most East Grinstead residents were unable to drive on the ice bound roads so we were able to really "keep it local". The London Road was closed between Lloyds and Railway Approach.

The Midsummer Market -24 July2010

This event drew in a large crowd with the French Market as the main feature. The London Road was closed between Lloyds and the Old Post Office

Committee officers for 2010 – 2011 are Melvin Phillips (Chairman), Tatjana Keenan (Secretary), Roger Martell (Treasurer) and Simon Kerr (Press Officer). Committee meetings attended this past year were on 14 April 2010, 15 September 2010, 22 September 2010 and 15 February 2011. The AGM will take place on 29 March 2011

(11) East Grinstead and District Credit Union – Councillor Baldwin

The past year has been devoted to growing the Credit Union's business, based on its local service and dedicated volunteer base, and finalising the merger with the West Sussex Credit Union. All issues have now been resolved and the merger proposals will be put to EGDCU Members in April.

(12) East Grinstead Fair Trade Town Steering Group - Councillor Marmara

The EG Fairtrade Steering Group continues to work towards promoting the work of the Fairtrade Foundation and increasing the use of Fairtrade products by businesses, groups and individuals in the town. They are also working on the renewal of East Grinstead's Fairtrade Town status.

The group meet approximately every two months and have around eight regular attendees with additional attendance on occasion. The group have been operating without a Chairman for a long time and have recently settled on a rotating Chair for each meeting with Alison Hill as Secretary keeping

things on track. I have been able to attend the majority of meetings and will be chairing the next one as part of this process.

The group has recently made contact with the Youth Council and are looking to work closely with them on various projects. They are also looking at having another successful stall at the May Fair where on previous years they have been very active, especially with their banana donating gorilla.

(13) East Grinstead War Memorial Limited – Councillor Gillbard

At its AGM, held on 28th April 2010, Allan Tyler stood down as chairman having served since 2002. Phil Baker was elected in his place with David Heasman elected as vice-chairman.

The Council of Management usually meets four times during the year and 2010/11 has not been an exception. It has been my pleasure to attend all of the meetings. The Executive Committee also meets regularly managing and keeping a close eye on the Company's affairs such as the effect on the track into Ashplatts Wood from Holtye Road of the Rydons and APCA planning application sites. The track, owned by the Company, borders the western boundaries of the sites. Both applicants have options with the Company to cross Company land but to date no option has been taken up.

Whilst much of the East Court estate owned by the Company is leased to various groups including MSDC, the Football Club and the Target Shooting Club the Company continues to spend money on maintenance work in the un-leased sections. This year the above mentioned Holtye track has been scrapped and levelled. In the course of this work objects which had been fly tipped were found and removed. The amount of rubbish fly tipped on or in the vicinity of the track, including metal objects and garden waste is a cause of concern to the Company. Members will have noticed recently the new fencing fronting onto Holtye Road in the vicinity of the East Court drive entrance. This project financed by the Company was a good example of partnership working as it was the Town Council outdoor team who prepared the site and erected the new fencing. At the last Council of Management meeting it was decided that the galvanized fencing would not be immediately painted but that the Company would review the situation in August taking account of the views of other organizations and individuals. It was also decided to bring some spring time colour to the area by planting some bulbs on the bank on the right hand side as you enter the drive.

The photographic exhibition, displayed this year on the railings alongside the pavement outside Chequer Mead, was another great success in all ways except that its costs were not matched by the income it generated. Despite obtaining grants from MSDC, The Gatwick Trust, EGTC and WSCC the Company had to subsidize the exhibition by more than £2,000; because of this it has been decided that there will be no new exhibition in 2011, however at the request of the Chequer Mead management some of the previously displayed pictures may appear again this coming summer, once again on the rails outside Chequer Mead.

Local schools are currently involved in a competition to design a Company logo. It is hoped that the logo will help to identify, promote and publicise the

work of the Company, the Council feeling that the Company's profile within the town is far too low with most people having no idea of what the Company is or does. There will be a prize for the winning design and a donation will also be made to the winner's school.

Donations made this year have included , Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen & Families Association (SSAFA) £3,000, British Legion £500, East Grinstead Museum £500, and the East Grinstead Stool Ball Club £200.

(14) Mid Sussex Association of Town Councils –Town Clerk

There have been three meetings this past year. Each of the Town Councils nominates four councillor representatives and East Grinstead is represented by the Town Mayor, Majority and Minority Group Leaders and Councillor Johnson. Substitutes are permitted. Burgess Hill has held the Chair (Town Mayor) and Secretariat (Town Clerk) since June 2010 and this will continue through to the early summer when Haywards Heath will take over.

There have been three meetings and copies of reports and minutes are freely available for reference on office file 9/16. Matters of common interest discussed this past year have included strategic planning, devolution of services, agency arrangements and enhanced partnerships, the new Localism agenda, and Town Centre management issues.

(15) Greenstede Talking News for the Blind – Councillor Mrs Mainstone

I am pleased to report that the Talking News service is providing a vital service for an increased number of listeners. This service to the community is provided by a dedicated team of volunteers who participate in a range of tasks. The volunteer roles include readers, editors, engineers and deliverers.

We now have new digital equipment installed which provides an improved quality for our listeners.

The Greenstede Talking News appreciates the grants they have received from EGTC to assist them on providing this important service.

Committee meetings attended this past year were on 14 April 2010, 28 June 2010, 27 July 2010, 18 August 2010, 15 September 2010, 22 September 2010 and 12 January 2011 (AGM).

(16) Queen Victoria NHS Foundation Trust Governors – Town Clerk

Members have received regular reports about the work of the Governors during the year. All papers are available for reference on office file 6/9/7. During the year I have attended four meetings of the Governors, two Governor's Forums, five meetings of the Appointments Committee and three of the Public Engagement Committee. I have also attended a number of meetings, including with the Chairman and Chief Executive to discuss issues of mutual interest and concern.

During the year the Board focused on the Trust's long-term strategic options. In particular it needs noting that decisions were taken that QVH should

remain an independent organisation; the Trust should apply for a loan to finance the building of six new theatres to replace those in American Wing, subject to a business case and options appraisal; and the Trust should set out its plans for continuous improvement to maintain a sound financial position whilst also repaying a loan.

As a result of the national economic downturn health services continue to receive fewer resources from the state in real terms than in recent years. The NHS as a whole is expected to find some £20 billion in savings. The QVH has undertaken a successful restructuring exercise which has enabled it to make savings that contribute to this overall objective. The increased efficiencies and throughputs of the operating theatres has been a key factor here.

At 14 February 2011 membership of the Trust stood at 10,353 public members and 812 staff members, a total of 11,165.

At the time of writing these papers no written reports have been received from the Council's representatives on Gatwick Area Conservation Campaign, East Grinstead Business Association, East Grinstead Museum Society and East Grinstead in Bloom. Any received late will be tabled.

Members are requested to note the above reports.

Agenda Item 9: APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR (Min 336 25.03.10)

There is a requirement for the post of Internal Auditor to be an annual appointment made by elected members.

Paul Hartley, MIOB, has provided sound and effective internal audit services for the Council this past year. His report will be considered at the next meeting on 23 June 2011. Members are requested to reappoint Mr Paul Hartley as Internal Auditor for the year ended 31st March 2012. In making this recommendation it needs noting that Mr Hartley has given advance notice that he would wish the Council to seek alternative arrangements thereafter.

Subject to Mr Hartley's reappointment your Officers will be sitting down with him in April to agree the Internal Audit Plan for 2011/2012 financial year, which will be reported to the next meeting on 23 June 2011 together with the outcomes of this year's internal audit programme.

Members' instructions are requested.

Agenda Item 10: RISK MANAGEMENT (Min 169 23.09.10).

At the meeting of Committee on 23rd September 2010 Members considered the biannual Risk Management report that identified the highest rated risks to the Council that were targeted to be addressed in the year to 31 March 2011. This update report outlines the progress and actions that have been taken in the last six months together with any new identified risks.

Outstanding from 2008/2009

1. Review job descriptions

Outstanding job descriptions and those relating to staff changes have been issued. This task will be revisited following the 2011/12 establishment review. Action ongoing.

Outstanding from 2010/2011

2. Health & Safety review

A detailed action plan with accountabilities has now been agreed at an executive level. A new Policy is being written and will be reported to a future meeting of this Committee. Heads of Service review Health and Safety on a monthly basis at their meetings, including updates in legislation and ensuring compliance. A recent focus has been given to tree inspection on our estates.

3. Risk assessment – Buildings

The Amenities Manager has prepared a checklist based on HSE guidelines and the Assistant Amenities Manager will complete this for each building, room by room. Action ongoing.

4. Bad Weather

Risk assessments of bad weather are continuously ongoing with periodic reports to Amenities and Tourism Committee., New equipment to clear snow from Town Centre pavements was bought following the last incident. Management of public expectations geared to the limited staff resource availability, and the Town Council's non-statutory responsibilities, remains the biggest area of concern.

5. Building security

Following the third (smaller) theft of lead from the Mansion roof we are currently awaiting approval of our insurance claim. Notwithstanding the insurer's requirement the Amenities Manager is installing some sensor alarms to deter further intrusion. Action ongoing.

6. IT Audit (Min 84 24.6.2010)

The highest priority items including the installation of a new router and a secure cabinet for the server have been actioned together with a number of lower priority recommendations. Mr Male has a further meeting with Alits, our external support company, on 26 April when he will complete all outstanding actions except those which are dependent on replacement of the server (scheduled for later in 2011/12).

Members are invited to consider this report and note and/or instruct accordingly.

Agenda Item 11: DRAFT ACCOUNTS AND AUDIT REGULATIONS 2011

The consultation period ended on 4 March 2011 and the new regulations will replace those issued in 2003 and amended in 2006 and 2009. The regulations come into force on 31 March 2011 although it is unclear whether they will apply to accounts for the year to that date as well as after that date.

In any case there are only two minor changes in the draft regulations which are relevant to this council:

1. The current regulation allows member approval of the accounts to be given by a committee – this is proposed to be changed to approval by all members. In practice we have historically provided for approval both by the Finance and General Purposes Committee and full Council. We therefore meet the new regulations.
2. The current regulation requires all relevant bodies to conduct an annual review of (the effectiveness of) internal audit. This requirement is considered too onerous for smaller bodies and will be removed from them. Smaller bodies are, however, still required to review their overall system of internal control annually. This will continue to be fulfilled by completion of Section 2 of the Annual Return – Annual Governance Statement.

Our statutory requirement, therefore, continues to be the preparation of an Annual Return which will have a 'light touch' audit until such time as our turnover exceeds £6.5 million.

Currently, officers provide further information in the form of Annual Financial Statements comprising a Statement of Accounting Policies, Income and Expenditure Account, Statement of Movement on the General Fund Balance, Balance Sheet, Cash Flow Statement and Notes to the Accounts (which explain Reserves, Pension Fund Assets and Liabilities and Fixed and Current Assets. These (internal) statements are not audited except in as far as they provide supporting information to the Annual Return.

Members are asked to note.

Agenda Item 12: PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Min 86 24.06.10) (Min 293 27.01.11)

Details of Performance Indicators in respect of responsibilities falling under the purview of Finance & General Purposes Committee are set out below for the period January and February 2011 inclusive. The comparable figures for the same months in 2009 are shown in brackets alongside. Members are asked to note.

Item	January	February
Invoices paid within 30 days	97%	95%
Total staff sickness in days	9	8

Agenda Item 13: THE FUTURE OF THE STANDARDS REGIME

The following letter on the future of the Standards Regime has been received from Tom Clark, Solicitor to Mid Sussex District Council and Monitoring Officer. Members are requested to give consideration to the issues raised and instruct on any response thereto?

“The Localism Bill published in December 2010 includes clauses 15-20 that have the affect of removing the present statutory Standards scheme in which the District Council have oversight of activities in Town and Parish Councils.

While the responsibility for each Council to promote good standards of member behaviour remain the need for a Standards Committee becomes optional.

The District Council's Standards Committee met on the 26th January 2011 and have in principal agreed that the District Council should continue with a Standards Committee with independent membership. The exact details of such a committee will need to be approved by Council later in the year. A similar view has been taken at West Sussex County Council.

The Standards Committee will be looking at the matter again in July and we would appreciate feedback on where your Council is going with Standards post the enactment of the Localism Bill at the end of this year.

The Standards regime we have had now since 2002 continues until the provisions in the Local Government Act 2000 are revoked which is unlikely to be before the end of this year. Therefore if you do have any written complaints about the behaviour of your Members relating to the Code of Conduct they should be directed to me as Monitoring Officer at the District Council and we will look into the complaints in the usual way. In recent years we have had very few complaints involving Town and Parish Councils.”

Member instructions are requested.

Agenda Item 14: WEST SUSSEX PENSION FUND – 2010 ACTUARIAL VALUATION AND EMPLOYER CONTRIBUTION (Min 83 24.06.10)

The triennial valuation of Local Government Pension Scheme Funds in England & Wales to 31 March 2010, together with the draft West Sussex County Council Funding Strategy Statement was received by us on 23 February 2011.

Members will be aware that, for the purposes of Fund valuation and contribution rates, we are included within the “Small Scheduled Bodies Pool” which comprises 33 town and parish councils all of which display broadly similar membership profiles. At 31 March 2010 the valuation of our pooled assets and liabilities resulted in a small surplus of £81,000 (2007 - £372,000) equivalent to a funding level of 101%. This equates highly favourably when set against the West Sussex Fund in total, which has a deficit of £286 million - equivalent to a funding level of 86%.

In prior years, employers in surplus were allowed to use the surplus to reduce their future contributions. However, WSCC is recommending that all employers pay at least the future service rate as calculated by the actuary at 31 March 2010. For members of the “Small Scheduled Bodies Pool” the proposed employer contribution rate for the three years commencing 1 April 2011 is 18.1% (2010/11 16.1%). Employee contribution rates are graduated and the average is 6.7%.

It should be noted that employers who are in deficit are liable to determine contribution rates, over a period not exceeding 20 years, which will recover their position.

Our inclusion in the pool does not preclude us from continuing to receive a FRS17 report which values only the pension assets and liabilities attributable to East Grinstead Town Council. We expect to receive this report in the week commencing 11 April 2011.

Members are asked to note.

Agenda Item 15: INVESTORS IN PEOPLE – ANNUAL STAFF TRAINING REPORT
(Min 339 25.03.10)

This annual report shows the training, both formal and informal, that has been undertaken by staff during the previous twelve months. This is an essential means of confirming the Council's commitment to training and continuing professional development of its staff resource. It is also important to recognise the role that training plays in developing staff to better undertake their work and serve the local community. The Town Council was last re-certificated as an IIP organisation in 2010, and our next re-evaluation is programmed for 2013. Members are asked to note.

Name	Trainer	Training Activity	Date
Jonathan Ansley	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)	10.11.10
Jonathan Ansley	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Mark Hayward	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)	10.11.10
Mark Hayward	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Graham Woodward	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)	10.11.10
Graham Woodward	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Gary Hearn	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)	10.11.10
Gary Hearn	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Roger Gwatkin	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Jack Clayden	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health	Control of Substances Hazardous to Health (COSHH)	10.11.10
Jack Clayden	Operator Training	Manual Lifting and Handling	12.11.10

	Services Ltd	Course	
Stuart Townsend	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Nigel Foster	First Stop Safety	Demystifying Portable Appliance Testing	30.11.10
Nigel Foster	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Sue Batt	Operator Training Services Ltd	Manual Lifting and Handling Course	12.11.10
Dawn Spalding	Central Sussex College	Powerpoint Presentation	29.04.10
Dawn Spalding	Sussex Archaeological Society	Archaeology of Wooded Landscape Conference	12.02.11
Chris Rolley	Society of Local Council Clerks	Annual Conference in Durham	15-17.10.10

Agenda Item 16: A CODE OF RECOMMENDED PRACTICE FOR LOCAL AUTHORITIES ON DATA TRANSPARENCY

On 7 February, the Government published a consultation in respect of its proposal to introduce a statutory Code of Recommended Practice on Data Transparency for Local Authorities. The aim of the Code is to ensure local authorities make certain information, particularly concerning expenditure, available and accessible to the public. It is intended that the Code will apply to parish councils and parish meetings without separate parish meetings.

The consultation which includes the draft code can be downloaded at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/corporate/publications/consultations/>. The related consultation documents for this exercise can also be located at the above mentioned link. The consultation confirms that the proposed Code is intended to provide a statutory basis to the Government's agenda for transparency by local authorities, which complements publication and disclosure requirements under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 (SI 2004/3391). It is for local authorities to determine the detailed implementation arrangements.

Paragraphs 2 and 3 of the consultation paper states: 'if democratic accountability is to increase, local residents do need to be able to hold their local authorities to account. This includes on matters such as council tax spending and also decisions made on local people's behalf. Transparency through the availability of re-usable data and open information should trigger greater willingness from local authorities for the public to see how their money is being spent. It also shines a spotlight on waste, inefficiency, establishes greater accountability, opens up new markets and improves access for small and local businesses and the voluntary sector. Transparency is the foundation of this accountability. If people are to play a bigger role in society, they need to have the tools and information to enable them to do so.'

Paragraph 9 of draft code requires local authorities to publish certain information. This data includes:

* Expenditure over £500, (including costs, supplier and transaction information). Any sole-trader or body acting in a business capacity in receipt of payments of at least £500 of public money should expect such payments to be transparent.

- * Grants and payments under contract to the voluntary community and social enterprise sector should be clearly itemised and listed.
- * Senior salaries, names (with the option for individuals to refuse to consent for their name to be published) job descriptions, responsibilities, budgets and numbers of staff. "Senior salaries" is defined as being all salaries which are above £58,200 (irrespective of post), which is the Senior Civil Service minimum pay band.
- * An organisational chart of the staff structure of the local authority.
- * Councillor allowances and expenses.
- * Copies of contracts and tenders to businesses and to the voluntary community and social enterprise sector.
- * Policies, performance, audits and key indicators on the authorities' fiscal and financial position.
- * Data of democratic running of the local authority including the constitution, election results, committee minutes, decision-making processes and records of decisions.

Paragraph 8 of the draft code states: 'There are growing expectations that new technologies and data should support transparency and accountability. Local authorities should not seek to pre-determine the value of their data and the level of public demand; rather they should understand what data they hold, what their communities want and then release it in a way that allows the public, developers or the media to present it in new ways that makes its meaning more apparent. It is this process that will create demand for data.'

Paragraphs 10 – 19 of the draft code prescribe how local authorities should publish (and correct) the information covered by the code. As publication of information is expected to be online, this may present some difficulties for parish councils and parish meetings though East Grinstead should not experience too many difficulties here.

To ensure that it is approaching its transparency agenda in the right way, the Government is seeking views from all those who would be affected by the draft code. The consultation closed on 14 March, 2011 and the Town Clerk agreed a response prior to this date with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of this Committee and a copy of this will be forwarded to all Members for information with this posting.

At the meeting Members will be asked to note the consultation and affirm their support for the response, which was made under delegated approval.

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Agenda Item 19: ANNUAL ESTABLISHMENT REPORT (Min 346 25.03.10)

In accordance with standard practice, for Member information and to meet audit requirements, Committee is asked to formally note details of the Council's current approved establishment.

Town Clerk's Report Ends