



Meeting **GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Date **Wednesday 30th January 2019 (commencing at 1.00 pm)**

membership

Persons absent are marked with `A`

COUNCILLORS

Bruce Laughton (Chairman)
Andy Sissons (Vice-Chairman)

Nicki Brooks
Steve Carr
Kate Foale
John Handley
Errol Henry JP

John Longdon
Keith Girling
Rachel Madden
Phil Rostance

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE

Heather Dickinson
Rob Disney
Martin Gately
Laura Mulvany-Law
Marjorie Toward
Simon Lacey
Claire Winter
Andrew Magyar
Michael Fowler

Chief Executive's Department

Jon Hawketts

Children and Family Services

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 18 December 2018, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

The following temporary changes of membership, for this meeting only, were reported:-

- Councillor John Longdon had replaced Councillor Keith Walker
- Councillor Keith Girling had replaced Councillor Mike Quigley MBE

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

None

4. PUBLIC SECTOR AUDIT APPOINTMENTS – LOCAL AUDIT QUALITY FORUM

Simon Lacey, Audit Team Leader, Financial Services, introduced the report which updated Members on key messages and emerging issues from the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) Local Audit Quality Forum held on 3rd December 2018, which he had attended with Councillor Andy Sissons.

RESOLVED: 2019/001

That the key messages arising from the forum be noted and consideration be given to what further assurance is required from management regarding emerging issues that are being effectively addressed at this Council.

5. ASSURANCE MAPPING UPDATE

Rob Disney, Head of Internal Audit, introduced the report which updated Members on the progress being made with the pilot approach to assurance mapping in 2018/19, and to invite feedback to influence the final stage of its implementation.

The Chairman undertook to examine assurance processes outside the meeting to see if it would be possible to involve opposition Members in internal audit meetings.

RESOLVED: 2019/002

That:

- 1) the suggested approach for addressing the gaps in assurance so far be agreed, and consideration be given as to whether there are any further gaps in assurance that they wish to see covered by the remainder of the pilot process
- 2) a further update be received, following completion of the pilot process, and that recommendations for future development be considered at that time

6. EXTERNAL RESIDENTIAL PLACEMENTS FOR LOOKED AFTER CHILDREN

Jon Hawketts, Group Manager, Commissioning and Placements, introduced the report which provided an update on the significantly reduced instances of off-contract spend on external placements for Looked After Children following the introduction of new contracting arrangements for the procurement of high needs supported accommodation for Looked After Children and care leavers from May 2018.

RESOLVED: 2019/003

- 1) That there were no action required in relation to the information required in the report.
- 2) That any further updates on the volume of off-contract spend on external placements for Looked After Children be provided through the annual report on the use of Financial Regulation Waivers.

7. EFFECTIVENESS OF THE AUDIT COMMITTEE ROLE

Rob Disney, Head of Internal Audit, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide feedback on the outcome of the discussion at the meeting in November 2018 around the effectiveness of the committee's performance of the audit commit role in the Council.

RESOLVED: 2019/004

That:

- 1) the summary feedback presented in the report be considered and future development items be brought to the committee to cover risk management
- 2) the Improvement and Change Sub-Committee should be requested to consider a self-assessment against the NAO's audit committee guidance for transformation in councils.
- 3) a draft Annual Report on the work of Governance and Ethics Committee be received by the Committee at its meeting scheduled for 1 May 2019
- 4) no additional areas were identified where actions needed to be taken or developmental items brought to future meetings.

8. THE CODE OF CONDUCT FOR COUNCILLORS AND CO-OPTED MEMBERS – APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT PERSONS

Heather Dickinson, Group Manager, Legal and Democratic Services, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to seek approval of a recruitment and selection process for the appointment of Independent Persons.

Following discussion, Councillors Andy Sissons, Errol Henry JP and Phil Rostance offered to comprise the membership of the cross-party steering group

RESOLVED: 2019/005

That:

- 1) a cross-party steering group comprising of 3 Members of Governance and Ethics Committee, and the Monitoring Officer as advisor, be established to oversee the recruitment process for the appointment of Independent Persons and undertake selection and interview, as required.
- 2) the role as detailed in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the report be advertised

- 3) the job description and person specification attached in the Appendix to the report be approved
- 4) a further report be received once recruitment and selection is complete, to consider endorsing the appointment of the preferred candidates to Full Council.

9. FOLLOW-UP OF INTERNAL AUDIT RECOMMENDATIONS

Rob Disney, Head of Internal Audit, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to report progress with the implementation of agreed management actions to address Internal Audit recommendations.

RESOLVED 2019/006

- 1) That a further report be brought back to the Governance and Ethics Committee in six months' time.

10. UPDATE ON USE OF RESOURCES BY COUNCILLORS

Heather Dickinson, Group Manager, Legal, Democratic Services and Complaints, introduced the report, the purpose of which was to provide an overview of the use of resources by councillors and seek agreement for appropriate actions.

During discussions, Members emphasised the excellent standard of service from the NCC print office, and that commercial rates should be paid by Councillors for this service.

RESOLVED: 2019/007

- 1) That the planned reimbursement of the costs of personal printing jobs by the Councillor for Ashfields division be noted, and that the approach be endorsed that any private printing by Councillors must be identified and agreed with the Print Office team in advance, who will then raise a charge for that work in line with their usual business practices and that this be communicated to Members.
- 2) That a limit on printing for each political group not be introduced at this time, but that this matter be kept under review and that reporting printing costs for the Mansfield Independents and the Council Chairman be shown separately in future.
- 3) That the use of Shireoaks Village Hall as a venue for Councillor Surgeries by the Councillor for Worksop West at a cost of £8 per month be allowed to continue.
- 4) That the use of Focus Point as a venue for Councillor Surgeries by the Councillors for Mansfield North at a cost of £900 per year be discontinued on the grounds of cost, but that six months be allowed for alternative processes to be put in place.
- 5) That any effective mechanisms for monitoring postal usage be explored by officers, and this be reported back at a future meeting.

- 6) That Members be reminded of the provisions of the Travel and Accommodation policy and that this be monitored and reported back to Committee as necessary.
- 7) That Members be reminded of the provisions of the Protocol on use of Resources including the Travel and Accommodation Policy.

11. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN DECISIONS **NOVEMBER 2018-JANUARY 2019**

Heather Dickinson, Group Manager for Legal and Democratic Services and Complaints introduced the report, the purpose of which was to inform the Committee about the Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman's (LGSCO) decisions relating to the Council in the period 30 November 2018-04 January 2019.

RESOLVED: 2019/008

- 1) That no actions were required in relation to the issues contained within the report.

12. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: 2019/009

That the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 2.21pm.

CHAIRMAN