



Meeting GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE

Date Thursday 21 April 2022 (commencing at 2.00 pm)

membership

### **COUNCILLORS**

Philip Owen (Chairman)  
Nigel Moxon (Vice-Chairman)

Richard Butler  
Neil Clarke MBE  
John Cottee  
Errol Henry JP  
Michael Payne - Apologies

Helen-Ann Smith  
Roger Upton  
Daniel Williamson  
Elizabeth Williamson

### **SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Councillor Jim Creamer for Councillor Michael Payne

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Richard Elston  
Nigel Stevenson  
Jo Toomey  
Marjorie Toward

Chief Executive's Department

Melanie Brooks

Adult Social Care and Health

Marion Clay  
Louise Benson

Children and Young People

Derek Higton

Place Department

### **EXTERNAL AUDIT**

Andrew Smith

Grant Thornton

## **1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 10 March 2022, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Payne (other County Council business)

### **3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

None.

### **4. UPDATE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN DECISIONS (FEBRUARY 2022 TO MARCH 2022)**

The report informed the Committee about the decisions of the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman relating to the Council since the last update was presented in March 2022. The Service Director, Education, Learning and Skills gave a brief overview of steps that had been put in place in response to the complaint where fault had been found by the Ombudsman around a failure to follow the process when reviewing an Education, Health and Care Plan.

During discussion, Members:

- Asked in what circumstances complaints related to matters being dealt with through other processes, for example, court proceedings, could subsequently be resubmitted on conclusion of those proceedings
- Asked about the process changes that had been made relating to the complaint relating to the accessibility of blue badge applications

#### **RESOLVED: 2022/012**

That no further actions were required in relation to the information contained within this report.

### **5. LEARNING FROM COMPLAINTS IN ADULT SOCIAL CARE**

The report, which was introduced by the Corporate Director, Adult Social Care and Health related to a trend that had previously been identified by the Committee. In receiving its regular reports on the Ombudsman's findings around complaints, members had noticed a number of those related to Adult Social Care and Health, and specifically communication.

During discussion, Members:

- Asked about opportunities for benchmarking complaint information nationally and regionally and were advised about a regional piece of work that was underway

#### **RESOLVED: 2022/013**

That the contents of the report be noted.

### **6. EXTERNAL AUDIT – ANNUAL AUDIT REPORT 2020-21**

During discussion, Members:

- Sought reassurance that the Council would be implementing the recommendations set out in the Annual Audit report
- Asked for reassurance about the timing of receipt for the Annual Audit Report 2021-22

**RESOLVED: 2022/014**

That the External Auditors' Annual Audit Report 2020/21 be accepted.

**7. STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2021-22 – ACCOUNTING POLICIES**

**RESOLVED: 2022/015**

That the authority's accounting policies for 2021/22 be approved.

**8. INFORMING THE RISK ASSESSMENT – 2021-22 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Members reviewed the report Informing the 'Risk Assessment – 2021-22 Statement of Accounts' and considered whether the management responses provided were consistent with their knowledge of the County Council.

**RESOLVED: 2022/016**

That the 'Informing the Audit Risk Assessment for Nottinghamshire County Council for 2021/22' document from the external auditors be accepted.

**9. LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE AND ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2021-22**

**RESOLVED: 2022/017**

- 1) That the Annual Governance Statement for 2021/22 be approved
- 2) That the contents of the Local Code of Corporate Governance be kept under review by the Committee through the in-year governance update reports to ensure the impact of the Cabinet/Scrutiny model of governance is accurately reflected in the Code.

**10. GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT**

**RESOLVED: 2022/018**

That the achievements of the Governance and Ethics Committee in 2021/22 be noted and the intended areas of focus for 2022/23 be endorsed.

**11. RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE – IMPLICATIONS FOR NOTTINGHAMSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

During discussion, Members:

- Asked whether Veolia had links with Russia. Members were advised that the Council's supply chains had been checked for direct links, of which there were none, and stated that the question would be followed-up with Committee members being advised of the outcome
- Asked questions about the schemes to support refugees from Ukraine and the role that the Council was playing

**RESOLVED: 2022/019**

That the risk assessment set out in the report and the actions being taken to mitigate those risks be noted.

**12. RUSHCLIFFE COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW (UPPER SAXONDALE)**

**RESOLVED: 2022/020**

That the Chief Executive be authorised to submit the letter attached as Appendix A to the report as a courtesy response to the consultation on the draft proposals to create a new, Upper Saxondale Parish Council within the borough of Rushcliffe, reserving its position for any formal response until phase 2 of the consultation.

**13. WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED: 2022/021**

That the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 2.40 pm.

CHAIRMAN