

Meeting **GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Date **Wednesday 13 March 2019 (commencing at 1.00 pm)**

**membership**

Persons absent are marked with `A`

**COUNCILLORS**

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

Nicki Brooks  
Kate Foale  
John Handley  
Errol Henry JP

Steve Carr **A**  
Rachel Madden  
Mike Quigley MBE  
Phil Rostance  
Keith Walker

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Glen Bicknell  
Heather Dickinson  
Rob Disney  
Keith Ford  
Laura Mulvany-Law  
Nigel Stevenson  
Marjorie Toward

Chief Executive's Department

Cherry Dunk  
Mark McCall

Adult Social Care and Public Health

**OTHER ATTENDEES**

Charles Daybell

Independent Person

John Gregory  
Lorraine Noak

Grant Thornton

**INDEPENDENT PERSON**

The Chairman highlighted that this would be the last meeting attended by Charles Daybell in his role as one of the Council's current Independent Persons. The Chairman thanked Mr Daybell for all of his hard work and helpful input in this role and in his previous role as Chairman of the former Standards Committee. Mr Daybell underlined the importance of ethics in local government and thanked Members for their help over the years.

**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 30 January 2019, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

## **2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence had been received from Councillor Rachel Madden (illness).

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

None

## **4. GRANT THORNTON – EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2018/19**

John Gregory, Engagement Lead and Lorraine Noak, Audit Manager of Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditors, introduced the report which highlighted the headline issues for the audit plan for the 2018/19 financial year.

In response to Members' queries, Mr Gregory:

- explained the non-disruptive approach taken to gathering evidence to inform risk-based assessments and the accounts approval process;
- noted the recent changes in the ownership arrangement of Via Limited; and
- underlined that, although the price of the external audit work had been reduced through the recent tendering process, this was possible through improved internal efficiencies within Grant Thornton rather than a reduction in the level of service being offered.

### **RESOLVED: 2019/010**

That the Audit Plan and responses to Members' queries be noted.

## **5. INTERNAL AUDIT 2018-19 TERM 2 REPORT & 2019-20 TERM 1 PLAN**

Rob Disney, Head of Internal Audit, introduced the report which updated Members on the work undertaken in Term 2 of the 2018/19 Internal Audit Plan and the work planned for Term 1 of the 2019/20 Plan.

Following discussions, Members requested that future reports include implications for service users and a key of terms be provided to explain terms such as 'Not assessed'. Members also welcomed the plans to consider the ethics of the Council and how policies were implemented in practice as part of future work.

The Chairman invited other Members to participate in his regular meetings with Mr Disney and Councillor Foale agreed to attend these meetings.

### **RESOLVED: 2019/011**

- 1) That implications for service users, a key of terms used within audit work and wider issues relating to the ethics of the Council be included in future reports.
- 2) That it be agreed that the planned coverage of Internal Audit's work in Term 1 of 2019/20 would deliver assurance to the Committee in priority areas.

**6. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE**

Rob Disney, Head of Internal Audit, introduced the report which set out the proposed scope for the Peer Challenge which had been suggested by the Committee.

**RESOLVED: 2019/012**

That the proposed scope for the Peer Challenge, as set out in the committee report, be approved.

**7. LOCAL GOVERNMENT & SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) DECISIONS JANUARY 2019 – FEBRUARY 2019**

Heather Dickinson, Group Manager for Legal and Democratic Services and Complaints introduced the report which detailed the LGSCO decisions received in this latest monitoring period.

**RESOLVED: 2019/013**

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

**8. OUTCOMES FROM THE COMPLAINTS PROCESS – APRIL 2017 TO MARCH 2018**

Heather Dickinson, Group Manager for Legal and Democratic Services and Complaints introduced the report which summarised complaints made to the Council in the previous financial year.

During discussions, Members requested that future reports clarify if a complaint had resulted in a subsequent report to the relevant service committee.

**RESOLVED: 2019/014**

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

**9. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman highlighted the Committee's Annual Report, which was scheduled for consideration at the next meeting on 1 May 2019, and asked Members to contact the Head of Internal Audit with any suggested issues for inclusion in that Report.

**RESOLVED: 2019/015**

That the work programme be agreed.

The meeting closed at 1.47 pm.

CHAIRMAN