



Meeting **GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Date **Thursday 10 March 2022 (commencing at 2.00 pm)**

**membership**

**COUNCILLORS**

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

Richard Butler	Helen-Ann Smith
Neil Clarke MBE	Roger Upton – Apologies
John Cottee – Apologies	Daniel Williamson
Errol Henry JP	Elizabeth Williamson - Apologies
Michael Payne – Apologies	

**SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

Councillor Jim Creamer for Councillor Michael Payne  
Councillor Bruce Laughton for Councillor Roger Upton  
Councillor John Lee for Councillor John Cottee

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE**

Rob Disney	Chief Executive's Department
Richard Elston	
Keith Ford	
Emma Hunter (remote)	
Simon Lacey	
Jo Toomey	
Marjorie Toward	

Sue Batty	Adult Social Care and Health
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**1. MINUTES**

The Minutes of the last meeting held on 27 January 2022, having been previously circulated, were confirmed and signed by the Chairman.

**2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor John Cottee (medical)
- Councillor Michael Payne (other reasons)
- Councillor Roger Upton (other reasons)
- Councillor Elizabeth Williamson (medical)

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

None.

*The Chairman stated that he would be changing the order of the agenda to consider the three items relating to audit and risk first.*

### **4. CORPORATE GOVERNANCE UPDATE**

**RESOLVED: 2022/005**

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

### **5. INTERNAL AUDIT PROGRESS TERM 2 2021-22 AND TERM 1 PLAN 2022-23**

**RESOLVED: 2022/006**

1. That no further actions are required in relation to the contents of this report.
2. That the planned coverage of Internal Audit's work in Term 1 of 2022/23 be progressed to help deliver assurance to the Committee in priority areas.

### **6. CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT 6-MONTHLY UPDATE**

The report informed members of developments in the Council's arrangements for corporate risk management and reported the latest movements in key, operational risks.

During discussion, Members:

- Asked questions and sought reassurance that the increased risks caused by the Russian invasion of Ukraine would be captured, monitored and addressed as part of the Council's risk management arrangements

**RESOLVED: 2022/007**

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

### **7. UPDATE ON LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND SOCIAL CARE OMBUDSMAN (LGSCO) DECISIONS DECEMBER 2021 TO JANUARY 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 to Committee in January 2021. The Service Director, Ageing Well Community Services responded to questions and provided reassurance about one complaint where fault was found, which related to Adult Social Care and Health.

**RESOLVED: 2022/008**

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

## **8. WHISTLEBLOWING UPDATE**

The report of the Monitoring Officer updated Committee members on whistleblowing activity during 2021. It also provided an update regarding the review of the current Whistleblowing Policy.

During discussion, Members:

- Asked about the timeline for the revision of the Whistleblowing Policy and additional training around whistleblowing arrangements that would be rolled out.

### **RESOLVED: 2022/009**

That the Committee supported the continuation of the work to review the Whistleblowing Policy with a view to replacing it with a Whistleblowing Code.

## **9. THE COUNCILLOR'S DIVISIONAL FUND – REVISED POLICY AND PROCEDURES**

The report of the Service Director, Customers, Governance and Employees sought approval from the Committee for an updated policy and related procedures in respect of the Councillor's Divisional Fund.

During discussion, Members:

- Considered whether any flexibility should be built into the top limit, proposed as £1,000, to enable, for instance, the funding of defibrillators, where the cost exceeded the proposed limit.
- Highlighted that a potential benefit of limiting the maximum payment was providing a wider spread of funding across a Division
- Noted that members of the Committee would pilot the electronic submission system once it had been put in place
- Supported the checks and balances that were proposed for bodies being awarded more than one grant in a year or where grant funding was being paid to individuals or businesses

### **RESOLVED: 2022/010**

1. That the revised Councillor Divisional Fund Policy be approved for implementation in the 2022-23 financial year.
2. That the proposed electronic system be developed as outlined in the report, with Members of the Committee to pilot the test system once developed.

## **10. WORK PROGRAMME**

The Chairman stated that he had recently met with the Corporate Director for Adult Social Care and Health regarding the update the Committee had requested on complaints where fault had related to communication issues. He stated that a report would be brought to Committee at either its April or June meeting.

**RESOLVED: 2022/011**

That the work programme be agreed, subject to the addition of the Adult Social Care and Health complaints item once a date had been agreed.

The meeting closed at 2.30 pm.

CHAIRMAN